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of DUN-GI and embraces those of Bûr-Sin, Gimil-Sin, and Ibi-Sin. Eleven important dates in DUN-GI'S reign, seven each of Bûr-Sin's and of Gimil-Sin's reign, and one in Ibi-Sin's are found in this division. A careful investigation of these published documents will do much to fix more precisely the chronology of this hitherto troublesome period in old Babylonian history.

On the supposition that Nabonidus was correct in his reference to Nâram-Sin, the sway of Agade would be located in the thirty-eighth century B. C., the accession of Ibi-Sin about the thirty-fifth or fourth century, and that of EN-TE-ME-NA somewhere about 4,000 B. C.

M. Thureau-Dangin has done a useful piece of work in placing in the hands of scholars these 431 inscriptions of such ancient periods of history. They have already aided somewhat in the solution of some knotty little problems, and when studied in detail will doubtless add much to our knowledge of the historical and religious questions of those times.

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COMPENDIOUS SYRIAC GRAMMAR.¹

It is a pleasure to greet this old friend in a new dress. Nöldeke's *Kurzgefasste syrische Grammatik*, of which the first edition was published in 1880 and the second in 1898, has well deserved its reputation as one of the most satisfactory of all the standard textbooks in the Semitic field. It is, indeed, a "compendious" treatise, avoiding theories and for the most part recording phenomena without attempting to explain them. But as a clear and authoritative statement of the main facts of the grammar with which it deals, it would be difficult to surpass.

Probably few will question the wisdom of putting forth an English edition. While it is true that most students of Syriac in England and America would be able to use a German textbook without serious difficulty, yet there would certainly be some who could use only a book printed in English; and to many others—the great majority, it is safe to say—the practical value of any such treatise as this one is very much increased as soon as it lies before them in their own mother-tongue. Moreover, it is a remarkable fact that in this important field of Syriac grammar we should have remained up to this time without any English textbook which could be called even tolerably adequate.

Dr. Crichton's translation is a satisfactory one. It follows the German closely, occasionally so closely as to be awkward, or even difficult to understand without a second reading, but, so far as I have observed, it always gives the meaning of the original, and generally gives it clearly. The English edition also has some points of decided superiority

¹COMPENDIOUS SYRIAC GRAMMAR. By Theodor Nöldeke. Translated from the second German edition by James A. Crichton, D.D. London: *Williams & Norgate*, 1904. xxxiv + 336 pp.

to the original. One of these is the use of rubrics in the margin at the beginning of every section, increasing the usefulness of the book for ready reference. Another, still more important, is the addition of a full "Index of Passages" at the end of the book, pp. 321-36. One of the most valuable features of Nöldeke's grammar is his carefully chosen and sifted collection of illustrative passages, and Dr. Crichton merits our warmest thanks for undertaking the labor of providing this index to them.

The general appearance of the book is like that of its original, the size of the page corresponding, and the type used (both Roman and Syriac) being the same. The proof-reading has been carefully done, though there are some corrections, noted in the table of errata on pp. 318 *sq.*, which the reader will do well to make at once in his copy. The familiar and very useful "Schrifttafel" by Professor Euting has not been forgotten.

This translation does not profess to embody a new revision of the grammar; nor was revision to be looked for in a work of this character so soon after the appearance of the German edition. The translator says in his preface: "No attempt has been made to alter in any way either the substance or the arrangement of the Grammar. Citations, it is true, have been again verified, and slight errors here and there have been tacitly corrected." It appears also from the brief note of approval which Professor Nöldeke prefixes to the edition that Dr. Crichton's laborious undertaking of verifying the citations has borne good fruit. The translator has also in a few cases added a supplemental or explanatory remark of his own; thus, the notes on pp. 3, 111, 291; while on p. 134 an addition to note 2, signed "Translator," has been inserted in manuscript in the copy which I have before me. Moreover, in spite of the disclaimer of anything new in this English edition, the intimate friend of the book in its German form will notice here and there the work of its author's revising hand. Thus, in the second German edition, in § 194 (speaking of the forms in the perf. Peal from verbs *tertiæ* with suffixes) it was said: "Formen der 3. m. pl. auf *ūn(ā)* vor Suffixen sind mir von diesen Verben nicht bekannt geworden." But here (p. 146) two examples of the form are given, one from the Lewis Gospels, and the other from John of Ephesus.

One could wish that this work of retouching had been carried a little farther, especially in the way of including more of the illustrations of unusual forms and constructions furnished by the Lewis (or "Sinaitic") Gospels, both because of the age and importance of this oldest Syriac version, only recently made known to us, and also because of the extent to which it is sure to be used by students in need of expert guidance. There are found here some archaic or dialectic forms of considerable interest which should be recorded in every Syriac grammar. Thus, on p. 133, in tabulating the forms of the anomalous verbs ܠܐ and ܠܐܝܠ, Nöldeke gives the imperative of the former as "ܠܐ (with loss of the ܠ and with *ā*), f. ܐܠ; pl. ܥܠ," etc.; and the corresponding forms of the other

verb as “ܠܐ” (with falling away of the ܠ and with *e*), ܠܐ, ܠܐ,” etc. No variation is noted in either case; and on p. 23, in the paragraph dealing with the occasional loss of an initial ܠ, it is said: “Even in writing, this ܠ is without exception wanting in . . . ܠܐ, ܠܐ, etc., ‘come,’ ܠܐ, ܠܐ, etc., ‘go.’” But in the Lewis Gospels we have the imperative forms ܠܐ (Matt. 8:4; 9:6, 13; 21:28), fem. ܠܐ (Mark 7:29), and plur. ܠܐ (Luke 10:3; 22:10); and from ܠܐ similarly the imperatives ܠܐ (Matt. 19:21; Luke 9:59) and plur. ܠܐ (Matt. 11:28). These forms, which I have not seen noticed anywhere, are all the more interesting since they agree with the forms with initial ܠ which occur in biblical Aramaic and the later Jewish dialects, and are the rule in Palestinian Syriac.

One point in which the form of the statement would need to be modified in the light of recent discovery is the note in regard to the word ܠܐ used as the mark of the direct object, pp. 226 *sq.* The very sparing use of this particle in old Syriac is described, and the remark added, that “it was completely obsolete in the fourth century.” But the inscription at Zebed, published by Littmann, *Semitic Inscriptions*, p. 47, seems to show that in some districts of Northern Syria the word continued to be used in the living speech at least as late as the fourth century.

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